

Serial No.: 10/730,440
Office Action Date: 04 December 2006

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Filed: 12/8/2003
Amendment Date: 1/17/2007

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REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

This is in response to the Office Action issued on 04 December 2006, with claims 1-36 pending in the application.

By this response, claims 4, 5, 22, 34, 35 have been amended. Claims 1-3, 6-20, and 23-33 have been canceled. No new matter has been added by this response to the Office Action.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Office Action stated claim 21 was allowable. This is noted with appreciation.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 6, 11, and 25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yoshiaki, Japanese Publication number JP 9-264492 (*Yoshiaki*).

Claims 1, 6, 11, and 25 have been canceled in order to put the application in condition for allowance and not for reasons of patentability.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being anticipated by *Yoshiaki*.

Claims 26, 27, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33 have been canceled in order to put the application in condition for allowance and not for reasons of patentability.

Claims 2-4, 7-9, 12-14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 22-24 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Yoshiaki* in view of Micsner, USPN 5,878,997 (*Miesner*).

Claims 4 and 22 have been amended to be dependent upon allowable claim 21, with further limitation, and are therefore allowable.

Claims 2, 3, 7-9, 12-14, 16, 18, 19, 20, 23-24 have been canceled in order to put the application in condition for allowance and not for reasons of patentability.

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Claims 34-36 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Yoshiaki* in view of Bell, U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0030523.

Claims 34 and 35 have been amended to be dependent upon allowable claim 21, with further limitation, and are therefore allowable.

Claim 36 is dependent upon now allowable claim 35, with further limitation, and is therefore allowable.


Withdrawn Claim

Claim 5 was earlier withdrawn in response to a restriction requirement. Claim 5 has been amended to be dependent upon allowable claim 21, with further limitation. Therefore, applicant asserts that claim 5 is allowable and should proceed to issue pursuant to 37 CFR §1.141.

Conclusion

Based on the above, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 21 and dependent claims 4, 5, 22, and 34-36 are in condition for allowance, and therefore, the same should be allowed to proceed to issue. If the Examiner has any questions regarding the contents of the present response the Applicants' attorney may be contacted at the phone number appearing below.

Respectfully submitted,



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